

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A valve element for selectively facilitating fluid communication therethrough comprising:
a membrane comprising a semi-rigid material and including a border portion and a raised portion, the raised portion configurable between a first position and a second position, wherein the first position is a concave position and the second position is a convex position, the membrane having a rigidity sufficient to maintain its shape in both its convex or concave position in the absence of external force applied directly to the membrane;
a base element comprising a flexible material and including a seat portion and an aperture, the seat portion having a first side attached to the border portion and a second side for attaching to a flexible sidewall of a packaging enclosure;
whereby, when set into the first position, the raised portion obstructs fluid communication through the aperture; and
whereby, when set into the second position, the raised portion allows fluid communication through the aperture.
2. Canceled
3. (Original) The valve element of claim 1, wherein the border portion is generally annular and the raised portion is centrally located within the border portion.
4. (Original) The valve element of claim 1, wherein the seat portion is generally annular and the aperture is circular and centrally located within the seat portion.
5. (Original) The valve element of claim 1, wherein the raised portion is shaped as a dome.

6. (Original) The valve element of claim 1, wherein the raised portion is larger in diameter than the aperture.

7. (Original) The valve element of claim 1, wherein the raised portion includes an inflexion region integral with the border portion and a central apex.

8. (Original) The valve element of claim 7, wherein the apex and the aperture are aligned.

9. (Original) The valve element of claim 7, whereby, when set into the first position, the inflexion region impinges against the seat portion.

10. Canceled

11. Canceled

12. (Original) The valve element of claim 1, further comprising a channel providing a clearance between the border portion and the seat portion.

13. (Original) The valve element of claim 1, further comprising an adhesive to attach the seat portion to the border portion.

14. (Original) The valve element of claim 13, wherein the adhesive includes two strips of adhesive traversing the seat portion on either side of the aperture, the two strips of adhesive attaching the seat portion to the border portion.

15. (Original) The valve element of claim 14, wherein the two strips of adhesive are parallel.

16. (Original) The valve element of claim 1, wherein the raised portion is about one-half the diameter of the membrane.

17. (Currently amended) A packaging enclosure comprising
a first sidewall;
a second sidewall comprising a flexible material and attached to the first sidewall to form an enclosed volume, the second sidewall including an opening;
a valve element including:

a base element comprising a flexible material and having a seat portion and an aperture, the base element attached to the second sidewall proximate the opening;

a membrane overlaying the base element, the membrane comprising a semi-rigid material and having a border portion and a raised portion, the raised portion configurable between a first position and a second position, wherein the first position is a concave position and the second position is a convex position, the membrane having a rigidity sufficient to maintain its shape in both its convex or concave position in the absence of external force applied directly to the membrane;

whereby, when in the first position, the raised portion is spaced apart from the aperture; and

whereby, when in the second position, the raised portion obstructs the aperture.

18. (Canceled)

19. (Original) The packaging enclosure of claim 17, wherein the aperture and the opening are generally aligned.

20. (Original) The packaging enclosure of claim 17, wherein the base element is attached to the membrane by an adhesive.

21. (Original) The packaging enclosure of claim 17, wherein the base element is attached to the side wall by an adhesive.
22. (Original) The packaging enclosure of claim 17, wherein base element is generally planar having a first surface and an opposing second surface, the first surface attached to the membrane and the second surface attached to the first sidewall.
23. (Original) The packaging enclosure of claim 22, wherein the first surface is attached to the membrane by two strips of adhesive, the two strips of adhesive defining a channel providing clearance between the first surface and the membrane.
24. (Original) The packaging enclosure of claim 22, wherein the second surface is attached to the first sidewall by adhesive.
25. (Original) The packaging enclosure of claim 17, wherein the raised portion is shaped as a dome.
26. (Original) The packaging enclosure of claim 17, further comprising fastening strips.
27. (Previously presented) The packaging enclosure of claim 17, wherein the first sidewall comprises a flexible material.
28. Canceled
29. Canceled
30. (Currently amended) A packaging enclosure comprising a first sidewall;

a second sidewall attached to the first sidewall to form an enclosed volume, the second sidewall comprising a flexible material and including an opening;

a valve element including an impermeate membrane overlaying the opening, the membrane comprising a semi-rigid material and having a border portion and a raised portion, the raised portion configurable between a first position and a second position, wherein the first position is a convex position and the second position is a concave position, the membrane having a rigidity sufficient to maintain its shape in both its convex or concave position in the absence of external force applied directly to the membrane;

whereby, when in the first position, the raised portion is spaced apart from the opening; and

whereby, when in the second position, the raised portion obstructs the opening.

31. (New) A valve element for selectively facilitating fluid communication therethrough comprising:

a membrane comprising a semi-rigid material and including a border portion lying in a plane and a raised portion, the raised portion configurable between a first position and a second position, wherein the first position is a concave position and the second position is a convex position, the membrane produces an audible pop or snap when the raised portion is moved across the plane of the border portion;

a base element comprising a flexible material and including a seat portion and an aperture, the seat portion having a first side attached to the border portion and a second side for attaching to a flexible sidewall of a packaging enclosure;

whereby, when set into the first position, the raised portion obstructs fluid communication through the aperture; and

whereby, when set into the second position, the raised portion allows fluid communication through the aperture.